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PRESS RELEASE

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USAID-supported HIV Research Featured in International Journal

Accra, Ghana – The U.S. Government, acting through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with the Johns Hopkins University Center for AIDS Research, the Foundation for AIDS Research, and the National Institutes of Health, announces the release of a special issue of the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes (JAIDS) titled *“HIV Risks and Vulnerabilities among Key Populations in West and Central Africa—Evidence to Inform HIV Prevention, Treatment, and Care.”*

Over 6.5 million people live with HIV in West and Central Africa, a region that spans 24 countries and has a population of over 350 million people. This amounts to an average HIV prevalence rate of 4.9 percent in the general population. However, in West Africa the prevalence is 19 to 30 times higher among key populations—a term for populations known to be at greater risk of infection—including female sex workers and their clients, men who have sex with men, and people who inject drugs. Until now, limited data has been an obstacle to fully understanding the dynamics of HIV transmission related to these high-risk populations in the region and the kind of programming needed to address this.

To fill this gap, USAID, with funding from the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, provided technical and financial assistance for this special JAIDS issue, which features 23 articles characterizing risks, vulnerabilities, and HIV prevention and treatment opportunities among the key populations. The articles present data from 11 different countries in the region, and include a wide range of analyses that use mathematical modeling, epidemiologic studies, qualitative studies, cost-effectiveness assessments and policy assessments. The special JAIDS issue will be available free online as of March 3, 2015 at the following link: <http://journals.lww.com/jaids/toc/2015/03011>.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

This special issue of JAIDS was guest-edited by **Tisha Wheeler, Laurent Kapesa, Alison Surdo Cheng, and R. Cameron Wolf**, all USAID staff working in the Office of HIV/AIDS in Washington D.C and in the West Africa Regional Health Office based in Accra, with the technical support of Dr. Stefan Baral from Johns Hopkins University.

The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is the U.S. Government initiative to help save the lives of those suffering from HIV/AIDS around the world. This historic commitment is the largest by any nation to combat a single disease internationally, and PEPFAR investments also help alleviate suffering from other diseases across the global health spectrum. PEPFAR is driven by a shared responsibility among donor and partner nations and others to make smart investments to save lives.

This activity is supported through the USAID West Africa Regional Office, whose goal is to promote social and economic well-being advanced by West Africans. Spanning 21 countries, USAID/West Africa designs and implements programs with West African partners to strengthen systems of non-violent conflict management, support economic growth, and expand quality health services. The American people, through USAID, provide economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries worldwide. For more information please visit <http://www.usaid.gov/west-africa-regional>.

Articles included in the special issue:

First Author	Title	Country
<u>Tisha Wheeler</u> USAID	Scaling up the HIV response with key populations in West and Central Africa: Identifying needs and promising approaches	Regional
<u>Marie-Claude Boily</u> Imperial College	What really is a concentrated HIV epidemic and what does it mean for West and Central Africa? Insights from mathematical modeling	Regional
<u>Jack MacAllister</u> amfAR	A comprehensive review of available epidemiologic and HIV service data for female sex workers, men who have sex with men and people who inject drugs in select West and Central African countries	Regional
<u>Sheree Schwartz</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	An urgent need for integration of family planning services into HIV care: The high burden of unplanned pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, and limited contraception use among female sex workers in Côte d'Ivoire	Côte D'Ivoire
<u>Bea Vuylsteke</u> Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp	Retention and risk factors for loss to follow-up of female and male sex workers on antiretroviral treatment in Ivory Coast: a retrospective cohort analysis	Côte D'Ivoire
<u>Stefan Baral</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Evaluating Respondent-Driven Sampling as an Implementation Tool For Universal Coverage of Antiretroviral Studies among Men who have Sex with Men Living with HIV	Nigeria
<u>Manhattan Charurat</u> University of Maryland	Uptake of Treatment as Prevention for HIV and Continuum of Care among HIV-positive Men who have Sex with Men in Nigeria	Nigeria
<u>Lisa Messersmith</u> Boston University	Drug use and sexual behavior: The multiple HIV vulnerabilities of men and women who inject drugs in Kumasi, Ghana	Ghana
<u>Monica Adhiambo Onvango</u> Boston University	"It's all about making a life": poverty, HIV, violence, and other vulnerabilities faced by young female sex workers in Kumasi, Ghana	Ghana
<u>Peter Wondergem</u> USAID	A short history of HIV-prevention programs for female sex workers in Ghana: lessons learned over three decades	Ghana
<u>Sarah Peitzmeier</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Associations of stigma with negative health outcomes for people living with HIV in The Gambia: Implications for key populations	The Gambia
<u>Erin Papworth</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Mothers who sell sex: a potential paradigm for integrated sexual and reproductive health interventions among women at high risk of HIV in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
<u>Ashley Grosso</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Structural determinants of health among women who started selling sex as minors in Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
<u>Andrea Wirtz</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Sexual violence, condom negotiation, and condom use in the context of sex work: results from two West African countries	Burkina Faso Togo
<u>Andrea Low</u> Imperial College	The Potential Impact of ART use in Female Sex Workers on transmission of HIV-1 in Bobo-Dioulasso: A Modelling Study	Burkina Faso
<u>Sandra Duvall</u> Futures Group	Assessment of policy and access to HIV prevention, care, and treatment services for men who have sex with men and for sex workers in Burkina Faso and Togo	Burkina Faso Togo
<u>Marylène Dugas</u> Laval University	Outreach strategies for the promotion of HIV testing and care: closing the gap between health services and female sex workers in Benin	Benin
<u>Georges Batona</u> Laval University	Understanding the intention of regular HIV-testing among female sex workers in Benin: a key issue for entry in HIV care	Benin
<u>Nejma Cheikh</u> The World Bank	Re-orienting the HIV response in Niger towards sex work interventions: from better evidence to improved practice	Niger
<u>Clint Trout</u> Boston University, USAID	West African Female Sex Workers in Mali: Reduction in HIV Prevalence and Differences in Risk Profiles of Sex Workers of Differing Nationalities of Origin	Mali
<u>Claire Holland</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Antiretroviral Treatment Coverage for Men who have sex with Men and Female Sex Workers Living with HIV in Cameroon	Cameroon
<u>Sahnah Lim</u> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health	Violence against female sex workers in Cameroon: Accounts of violence, harm reduction, and potential solutions	Cameroon
<u>Salva Mulongo</u> PATH	Applying Innovative Approaches for Reaching Men Who Have Sex With Men and Female Sex Workers in the Democratic Republic of Congo	DRC